

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for managing storage space in one or more data storage devices coupled to a storage area network (SAN), the method comprising:
 - receiving a request for storage space from a requester coupled to the SAN, the request specifying one or more criteria associated with the requested storage space;
 - selecting one of the data storage devices according to volume characteristics of the devices, where the selected device is a device having volume characteristics that best match the one or more criteria specified in the request;
 - returning an identification associated with the selected data storage device to the requester; and
 - creating a communication path between the requester and the selected data storage device.